



## COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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### ZACHARY PARKER

Ward 5 Councilmember  
Chair, Committee on Youth Affairs

### COMMITTEE MEMBER

Health  
Human Services  
Transportation and the Environment

October 4, 2025

Nyasha Smith, Secretary  
Council of the District of Columbia  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Secretary Smith,

Today I am introducing the Youth Financial Literacy Pilot Amendment Act of 2025. Please find enclosed a signed copy of the legislation.

The Committee on Youth Affairs has heard repeatedly that access to money and the ability to acquire employment are essential issues for young people in the District. Additionally, while truancy rates have improved from roughly 37% in 2022-2023 to 30% in 2023-2024, there remains a continued need to address reasons for District youth absenteeism.

An innovative pilot from the Rooted Schools Foundation that provides direct cash payments to students, operated in cities like New Orleans, New York City, Indianapolis and now in DC at Digital Pioneers PCS, seeks to scale a solution to boost youth academics and get more students in school. Studies show that cash transfer programs providing school-age youth with monetary resources produces a positive impact on youth wellbeing and educational outcomes.<sup>1</sup> To determine whether cash transfer programs are an effective mechanism in the District and to gather vital data points related to youth financial literacy and student attendance rates, this bill creates its own focused pilot program that delivers cash transfers to select public school students.

This legislation:

- provides \$50 weekly stipends to eligible students under a pilot program for 40 weeks; and
- requires independent evaluation of pilot outcomes.

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<sup>1</sup> See S. West et.al, *The \$50 Study: Outcomes from a Dual-Year Randomized Controlled Trial*, The Rooted School Foundation (2024).

This legislation aligns with our ongoing mission to boost school attendance and bolster youth wellness across the city. I remain committed to helping youth achieve their dreams in the classroom and beyond.

Please do not hesitate to contact my Committee Director, Thomas Franco, at [tfranco@dccouncil.gov](mailto:tfranco@dccouncil.gov) or my Legislative Assistant, Allison Bailey, at [abailey@dccouncil.gov](mailto:abailey@dccouncil.gov) with any questions or concerns.

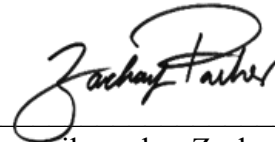
Signed,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Zachary Parker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Zachary" and last name "Parker" clearly legible.

Zachary Parker  
Councilmember, Ward 5  
Chair, Committee on Youth Affairs  
Council of the District of Columbia

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3 Councilmember Brooke Pinto  
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5 Councilmember Zachary Parker  
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7 A BILL  
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11 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
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16 To amend the State Education Office Establishment Act of 2000 to establish a grant program to  
17 provide a \$50 weekly direct cash stipend to eligible students in participating schools in  
18 the District of Columbia.  
19

20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this  
21 act may be cited as the “Youth Financial Literacy Pilot Amendment Act of 2025”.

22 Sec. 2. The State Education Office Establishment Act of 2000, effective October 21,  
23 2000 (D.C. Law 13-176; D.C. Official Code § 38-2601 *et seq.*), is amended by adding a new  
24 section 7j to read as follows:

25 “Sec. 7j. Fifty Dollar a Week Pilot Program.

26 “(a) Beginning in School Year 2026-2027 and for the three subsequent School Years,  
27 OSSE shall administer a Fifty Dollar a Week Pilot Program to provide a \$50 weekly direct cash  
28 stipend to eligible students in participating schools in the District of Columbia for 40 weeks and  
29 shall study its effects on student wellbeing, attendance, and financial literacy.

30 “(b) OSSE shall contract with an organization that has experience assessing the  
31 effectiveness of a cash transfer program for high school students—including the impact of direct,  
32 unconditional cash transfers on financial hardship, financial capability, upward economic

mobility, and academic achievement;

“(c) In consultation with OSSE, the contract awardee shall issue a call for applications and select participating schools for the pilot by July 1, 2026 for the School Year 2026-2027 and by July 1 of each subsequent School Year the pilot is administered. Participation in the pilot shall be based on criteria OSSE establishes.

“(d) In consultation with OSSE, the contract awardee shall:

“(1) Identify an appropriate method to disburse the direct cash stipend;

“(2) Invite eligible students at participating high schools to enroll in the \$50 study;

“(3) Enroll eligible students;

“(4) Administer the direct cash stipend to eligible students participating in the Fifty Dollar a Week Pilot Program;

“(5) Evaluate the efficacy of the program; and,

“(6) Submit on October 1 of each year during the grant period an annual progress report to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education and the Council of the District of Columbia on program performance.

“(e) For the purposes of this section, the term:

“(1) “Direct cash stipend” means unconditional, recurring cash provided directly to middle and high school students.

“(2) “Participating school” means a D.C. public or public charter high school with an at-risk student population that exceeds 40% of the school's total enrollment that is participating in the pilot program.

“(3) “Eligible student” means a student enrolled in a participating school for the

entire school year at a participating school and whose parent or guardian consents to their participation in the Fifty Dollar a Week Pilot Program.”.

Sec. 3. Fiscal impact statement.

The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975, approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

Sec. 4. Effective date.

This act shall take effect after approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of Columbia Register.